

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, July 20, 1895, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 10 rue Nitot, July 20th 1895.
My darling Alec:

It is delightful to begin counting the days until you may be on your way here. I hope you want to see me a good lot, for I want to see you very much. To think it is too late to write to you in Baddeck—no I think I will venture this there, although it will be the very last.

I haven't written for a perfect age, but I could hardly help it I have been so busy and not very well. I decided to send the children to Morst yesterday, and there has been everything to do for them, and a crowd of other things at the same time.

One day we went to the Opera. Did I tell you about it? Time has flown so fast I don't know. Mt. Pollok took us, and we had a box behind the scenes, on the stage so that when the curtain came down we could see all the process of changing scenes and see the actors and actresses turn into men and women and their own proper persons and have a little fun before becoming tragic heroines and heros. The opera was Faust. I think the children know as much of the play now as they did before, which perhaps is just as well. This was Friday, Sunday was the Fête Nationale and I am glad I won't have to go to another. We had tickets to the official tribune at the review of the troops so I supposed that meant seats, but it didn't and we were very tired when it ended. After that we drove about town and saw people dancing on the streets, perfectly respectable people. We had to sleep out of the Convent for each 2 performance. Since that day I have been getting the children's clothes ready for school, and now I am glad of a rest. I am alone here, but have a maid sewing all day, then Miss Duncan is with me nearly all the time. I am alone at night, but that is all right here as there are no men in the building and I leave my door unlocked. Then we have made friends with some American ladies here who will help me in any difficulty.

We had a fight the other day with Daisy's music teacher. I did not know but it might end in the law courts, though I hoped not for your sake, but I got very mad and I think you would also if you had been in my place. Daisy said it was like play,-acting the way I drew myself up and said "I refuse to pay you today, I refuse," the woman might not understand English, but she understood my manner. She sent her lawyer yesterday, and he came in very much excited with a good deal to say about the shamefulness of a young American girl allowing herself to impugn the honesty of an artist of Mlle. Fahre's distinction. He spoke in English and I was very much pleased with myself when I saw how speedily he quieted down under my words. Before the end he had become absolutely apologetic and this morning I had a note from him acknowledging the justice of my claims and

backing down completely. I have sent Charles with my reply saying that I was always unwilling to submit to anything that seemed to me like an attempt at imposition and therefore I had resented what had seemed to me an attempt to do so on Mlle. Fabre's part. However I realized that there was always a chance of misunderstanding when the languages were different, therefore I sent him the difference between the sum he admitted she could only claim from me and what 3 she had demanded. I have not heard from him yet, but presume it is all right. I would send you copies of the correspondence but that you may not get this. There is no doubt however, that she did mean to cheat me. I told her in the first place that if Mlle. Filippi, who had engaged her and made the terms for me said she was right I would pay her at once, and it was her refusal to wait for Mlle. Filippi that made me so sure she was trying to cheat, and Mlle. Filippi corroborates me entirely.

It is very cool here. I think you would be quite satisfied with the climate of Paris as we have found it this year. But it is the city and not the country, and I am tired of and hate bricks and mortar when the grass is green and flowers growing in the open air. All the French society people have gone and left the city to Americans. The Rue de la Paix seems full of them and I like them better than French women after all.

Goodbye my dear, Au revoir, how glad I shall be to see you once more. Yours ever,